

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****Patent and Trademark Office**Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------

09/446,951 02/28/00 DAVIS

S 8697-001-27P

STEVEN B KELBER
LONG ALDRIDGE & NORMAN
701 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW
6TH FLOOR
WASHINGTON DC 20004

PM82/0907

EXAMINER

CUFF, M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3611

DATE MAILED:

09/07/00

6

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/446,951	Applicant(s) Davis
	Examiner Michael Cuff	Group Art Unit 3611



Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

This action is **FINAL**.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 1 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

Claims 1-33 are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.

The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

All Some* None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

received.

received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____.

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

Interview Summary, PTO-413

Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---

Art Unit: 3611

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in response to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-5, drawn to a step mounted in lieu of a hitch.

Group II, claim(s) 6-13, drawn to a step mounted on a hitch ball.

Group III, claim(s) 14-28, drawn to a step mounted between a towing hitch and a bolt-up type hitch.

Group IV, claim(s) 29-33, drawn to a step mounted by a gooseneck.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I thru IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The claimed steps have only the feature of a step in common which is not considered to be a "special technical feature" in defining a "step apparatus". Groups I thru IV fail to meet the criteria of a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept as set forth in MPEP 1850 and 1893.03(d).

Art Unit: 3611

3. A telephone call was made to Song Jung on 9/5/00 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

4. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(I).

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Michael Cuff at telephone number (703) 308-0610.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 305-7687.

Michael Cuff 9/5/00
Michael Cuff
September 05, 2000

J. J. Swann
J. J. SWANN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600